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## Stop making cents: U.S. Mint moves forward with plans to kill the penny

By FATIMA HUSSEIN and ALAN SUDERMAN  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Trump administration says making cents doesn't make sense anymore.

The U.S. Mint has made its final order of penny blanks and plans to stop producing the coin when those run out, a Treasury Department official confirmed Thursday. This move comes as the cost of making pennies has increased markedly, by upward of 20% in 2024, according to the Treasury.

By stopping the penny's production, the Treasury expects an immediate annual savings of \$56 million in reduced material costs, according to the official, who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity to preview the news.

In February, President Donald Trump announced that he had ordered his administration to cease production of the 1-cent coin.

"For far too long the United States has minted pennies which literally cost us more than 2 cents. This is so wasteful!" Trump wrote at that time in a post on his Truth Social site. "I have instructed my Secretary of the US Treasury to stop producing new pennies."



Freshly-made pennies sit in a bin at the U.S. Mint in Denver on Aug. 15, 2007.

Associated Press

There are about 114 billion pennies currently in circulation in the United States that's \$1.14 billion but they are greatly underutilized, the Treasury says. The penny was one of the first coins made by the U.S. Mint after its establishment in 1792.

The nation's treasury secretary has the authority to mint and issue coins "in amounts the secretary decides are necessary to meet the needs of the United States."

Advocates for ditching the penny cite its high production cost almost 4 cents

per penny now, according to the U.S. Mint and limited utility. Fans of the penny cite its usefulness in charity drives and relative bargain in production costs compared with the nickel, which costs almost 14 cents to mint.

The Wall Street Journal first reported the news.

Pennies are the most popular coin made by the U.S. Mint, which reported making 3.2 billion of them last year.

That's more than half of all the new coins it made last year.

Congress, which dictates currency specifications such as the size and metal content of coins, could make Trump's order permanent through law. But past congressional efforts to ditch the penny have failed.

Two bipartisan bills to kill the penny permanently were introduced this year.

Sens. Mike Lee, R-Utah, and Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., introduced the Make Sense Not Cents Act this month. In April, Reps. Lisa McClain, R-Mich., and Robert Garcia, D-Calif., along with Sens.

Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., introduced the Common Cents Act.

Jay Zagorsky, professor of markets, public policy, and law at Boston University, said that while he supports the move to end penny production, Congress must include language in any proposed legislation to require rounding up in pricing, which will eliminate the demand for pennies.

Zagorsky, who recently published a book called "The Power of Cash: Why Using Paper Money is Good for You and Society," said otherwise simply ditching the penny will only increase demand for nickels, which are even more expensive, at 14 cents to produce.

"If we suddenly have to produce a lot of nickels and we lose more money on producing every nickel eliminating the penny doesn't make any sense."

Mark Weller, executive director of the Americans for Common Cents group which conducts research and provides information to Congress and the Executive Branch on the value and benefits of the penny says "there has been an evolution over the past six months that inevitability the production of the penny will be halted." □

## Trump administration seeks to end protections for immigrant children in federal custody



In this March 30, 2021, file photo, young unaccompanied migrants, watch television inside a playpen at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility, the main detention center for unaccompanied children in the Rio Grande Valley, in Donna, Texas.

Associated Press

By VALERIE GONZALEZ  
Associated Press

**MCALLEN, Texas (AP)** — The Trump administration is seeking to end an immigration policy cornerstone that since the 1990s has offered protections to child migrants in federal custody, a move that will be challenged by advocates, according to a court filing Thursday.

The protections in place, known as the Flores Settlement, largely limit to 72 hours the amount of time that child migrants traveling alone or with family and detained by the U.S. Border Patrol. They also ensure the children are kept in safe and sanitary conditions.

President Donald Trump tried to end the protections during his first term and his allies have long railed against it.

The court filing, submitted jointly by the

administration and advocates, says the government plans to detail its arguments later Thursday and proposes a hearing on July 18 before U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee.

The settlement is named for a Salvadoran girl, Jenny Flores, whose lawsuit alleging widespread mistreatment of children in custody in the 1980s prompted special oversight.

In August 2019, the first Trump administration asked a judge to dissolve the agreement. Its motion eventually was struck down in December 2020 by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Under the Biden administration, oversight protections for child migrants were lifted for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services after new guidelines were put in place last year. □

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## Hate groups in the U.S. decline but their influence grows, report shows

By TERRY TANG  
Associated Press

The number of white nationalist, hate and anti-government groups around the U.S. dropped slightly in 2024, not because of any shrinking influence but rather the opposite. Many feel their beliefs, which includes racist narratives and so-called Christian persecution, have become more normalized in government and mainstream discourse.

In its annual Year in Hate and Extremism report, released Thursday, the Southern Poverty Law Center said it counted 1,371 hate and extremist groups, a 5% decline. The nonprofit group attributes this to a lesser sense of urgency to organize because their beliefs have infiltrated politics, education and society in general. Some of the ways they have done this are through pushing for bans on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, book bans and protests of drag story hours, the report says.

Last year, there were 533 active hate groups. These include groups who express views that are anti-LGBTQ+, anti-immigrant, antisemitic



White nationalist demonstrators walk into the entrance of Lee Park surrounded by counter demonstrators in Charlottesville, Va., Saturday, Aug. 12, 2017.

Associated Press

and anti-Muslim. This number has been steadily declining since reaching a historic high of 1,021 in 2018.

"The trends have slightly sort of gone up and down but let's just say generally, since our tracking, have increased. And that's not just on a total numbers level but also on a per capita," said Rachel Carroll Rivas, interim director of the SPLC's Intelligence Project.

The number of anti-government groups last year totaled 838, an increase from recent years, according to the law center based in Montgomery, Alabama, that tracks racism, xenophobia and far-right militias. These groups see the federal government as "tyrannical" and include militias and self-described sovereign citizens.

Male supremacy also continues to emerge as an in-

fluential hate group. The SPLC documented seven new male supremacist hate groups, making the total 16. Their rhetoric espouses misogyny and strict gender roles.

Their rising influence came during an election year when the country saw a woman of color be the first presidential nominee for a major political party.

"I'm not sure it's a direct

result of the candidacy of Kamala Harris," Rivas said. However, SPLC researchers went into chatrooms of white supremacist organizations during the election and found "intense vilification, the claiming of demonization of Harris as well as just the pushing of the idea falsely that women would not be qualified."

Some people on the far right have also pushed a belief that white Christian culture is being threatened by a "demographic crisis" including fewer births.

"Politicians, pundits and provocateurs on the right have turned toward demonic language to tar those who disagree with them," the report states.

Last year's report found "record numbers" of white nationalist and anti-LGBTQ groups in 2023.

The analysis highlighted how far-right groups tried to waylay democracy through disinformation, false conspiracy theories and threats to election workers. It also examined how supporters of Christian supremacy used similar topics to organize a movement toward authoritarianism. □

## Pope Leo XIV makes first U.S. bishop appointment, fills San Diego vacancy

**VATICAN CITY (AP)** — Pope Leo XIV, history's first American pope, on Thursday made his first American bishop appointment as he named Bishop Michael Pham as bishop of San Diego, California.

Pham, 58, is currently an auxiliary bishop in the diocese. He fills the vacancy created when Pope Francis named Cardinal Robert McElroy archbishop of Washington D.C. earlier this year.

Pham, who was born in Da Nang, Vietnam, was ordained a priest in the San Diego diocese in 1999 and was made a bishop in 2023. He was in charge of programming for the dioceses' ethnic groups and as of March had been the main diocesan administrator. The diocese of San Diego counts about 1.3 million Catholics in a total population of about 3.5 million people, according to the U.S. Catholic bishops

conference. In another appointment Thursday, Leo named a nun as the No. 2 in the Vatican's congregation for religious orders, a possible sign that he plans to continue Francis' efforts to promote more women to decision-making roles in the Vatican.

Sister Tiziana Merletti, the former head of the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, is a canon lawyer and now reports to Sister Simona Brambilla,



Pope Leo XIV holds his first weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at The Vatican, Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

Associated Press

whom Francis in January appointed as the first-ever

woman to head a major Holy See office. □

## Trump administration bars Harvard from enrolling foreign students

By COLLIN BINKLEY and MICHAEL CASEY  
AP Education Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Trump administration revoked Harvard University's ability to enroll international students in its escalating battle with the Ivy League school, saying thousands of current students must transfer to other schools or leave the country. The Department of Homeland Security announced the action Thursday, saying Harvard has created an unsafe campus environment by allowing "anti-American, pro-terrorist agitators" to assault Jewish students on campus. It also accused Harvard of coordinating with the Chinese Communist Party, saying it hosted and trained members of a Chinese paramilitary group as recently as 2024. "This means Harvard can no longer enroll foreign students and existing foreign students must transfer or lose their legal status," the agency said in a statement.

Harvard enrolls almost 6,800 foreign students at its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, accounting for more than a quarter of its student body. Most are graduate students, coming from more than 100 countries.

Harvard called the action unlawful and said it's working to provide guidance to students.

"This retaliatory action threatens serious harm to the Har-



People walk between buildings, Dec. 17, 2024, on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass.

vard community and our country, and undermines Harvard's academic and research mission," the university said in a statement.

The dispute stems from an April 16 request from Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. The letter demanded that Harvard turn over information about foreign students that might implicate them in violence or protests that could lead to their deportation.

In a letter to Harvard on Thursday, Noem said the school's sanction is "the unfortunate result of Harvard's failure to comply with simple reporting requirements." It bars Harvard

from hosting international students for the upcoming 2025-26 school year.

Noem said Harvard can regain its ability to host foreign students if it produces a trove of records on foreign students within 72 hours. Her updated request demands all records, including audio or video footage, of foreign students participating in protests or dangerous activity on campus.

"This administration is holding Harvard accountable for fostering violence, antisemitism, and coordinating with the Chinese Communist Party on its campus," Noem said in a statement.

The administration drew condemnation from free speech

The action revoked Harvard's certification in the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which gives the school the ability to sponsor international students to get their visas and attend school in the United States.

Students in Harvard College Democrats said the Trump administration is playing with students' lives to push a radical agenda and to quiet dissent. "Trump's attack on international students is textbook authoritarianism — Harvard must continue to hold the line," the group said in a statement.

The administration drew condemnation from free speech

Associated Press

groups including the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, which said Noem is demanding a "surveillance state."

"This sweeping fishing expedition reaches protected expression and must be flatly rejected," the group said in a statement.

Noem's sanction opens a new front in the Trump administration's battle with Harvard. The nation's oldest and wealthiest university, Harvard was the first to openly defy White House demands to limit pro-Palestinian protests and eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion policies.

The federal government has responded by cutting \$2.6 billion in federal grants at Harvard, forcing it to self-fund much of its sprawling research operation. President Donald Trump has said he wants to strip the university of its tax-exempt status.

Many of Harvard's punishments have come through a federal antisemitism task force that says the university failed to protect Jewish students from harassment and violence amid a nationwide wave of pro-Palestinian protests.

Homeland Security officials echoed those concerns in its Thursday announcement. It offered examples including a recent internal report at Harvard finding that many Jewish students reported facing discrimination or bias on campus. □



This undated handout photo provided by the embassy of Israel in the U.S. shows staff members of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, Israeli citizen Yaron Lischinsky, right, and U.S. citizen Sarah Milgrim, who were shot and killed while leaving an event at a Jewish museum in Washington.

Associated Press

By ERIC TUCKER, MICHAEL KUNZELMAN and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The man accused of fatally shooting two staff members of the Israeli Embassy in

## Man accused of killing 2 Israeli Embassy staffers in DC charged with murder of foreign officials

Washington as they left an event at a Jewish museum told police after his arrest, "I did it for Palestine, I did it for Gaza," federal authorities said Thursday in announcing criminal charges.

Elias Rodriguez, 31, shouted "Free Palestine" as he was led away after his arrest and told police that he was the one who "did it," according to charging documents that provided chilling new details of a Wednesday night attack that killed an American woman and Israeli man who were set to become

engaged. Rodriguez faces charges of murder of foreign officials and other crimes. Additional charges are likely, prosecutors said Thursday, as authorities continue to investigate the killings as both a hate crime against the Jewish community and terrorism.

"Violence against anyone, based on their religion is an act of cowardice. It is not an act of a hero," said Jeanine Pirro, the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia. "Antisemitism will not be tolerated, especially in the na-

tion's capital." Court documents made public Thursday say the shooting was captured on surveillance video outside the museum, which authorities say showed Rodriguez firing at the victims several more times after they fell to the ground.

After he was arrested, Rodriguez told detectives that he admired the man who set himself on fire outside the Israeli embassy in February 2024 and described the man as "courageous" and a "martyr," court documents say. □

# U.K. will roll out chemical castration for sex offenders

By PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — The British government will rollout the use of medication to suppress the sex drive of sex offenders, as part of a package of measures to reduce the risk of reoffending and alleviate the pressures on the prison system, which is running out of space.

Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood said Thursday that so-called chemical castration would be used in 20 prisons in two regions and that she was considering making it mandatory.

"Of course, it is vital that this approach is taken alongside psychological interventions that target other causes of offending, like asserting power and control," she said in a statement to Parliament following the release of an independent sentencing review.

Though the review highlighted the treatment wouldn't be relevant for some sex offenders such as rapists driven by power and control, rather than sexual preoccupation, Mahmood said that studies show that chemical castration can lead to a 60% reduction in reoffending.

It's been used in Germany



**British Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood speaks in the No. 9 Downing Street Media Briefing Room, in Westminster, London, May 14, 2025.**

Associated Press

and Denmark on a voluntary basis, and in Poland as mandatory for some offenders.

The recommendation was part of a wide-ranging review led by former Justice Secretary David Gauke. As well as looking at ways to cut reoffending, Gauke recommended reforms to overhaul the prisons system, which is running at near capacity.

One of the first things Mahmood did as justice minister after Labour returned to power after 14 years last July was sanction an early-release program for prisoners to free up space. She says she inherited a judicial system that had been neglected for years by the previous Conservative government and set up the review as a means to stabilize it. "If our prisons

collapse, courts are forced to suspend trials," she said. "The police must halt their arrests, crime goes unpunished, criminals run amok and chaos reigns. We face the breakdown of law and order in this country." The review recommended that criminals could be released from prison earlier than they are now, while judges could be given more flexibility to impose

punishments such as driving bans. It also recommended that sentences of less than 12 months would also be scrapped, apart from exceptional circumstances such as domestic abuse cases. It also called for the immediate deportation for foreign nationals handed a three-year sentence or less.

The review called for higher investment in the probation service to allow officers to spend more time with offenders for their rehabilitation and extra funding for the many more who are monitored with electronic tags in the community.

"If the government doesn't put the resources into probation that is necessary, then the risk here is that we won't make progress on rehabilitation that we need, and there will be a public backlash against it," Gauke said.

The prison population in England and Wales has doubled over the past three decades or so to nearly 90,000. That's despite a fall in crime rates and is driven in part by the fact that longer sentences are being handed out amid pressure to be tough on crime. □

## Fewer study and work visas lead to halving in net migration in the UK in 2024

By PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — Fewer work and study visas contributed to a near-halving in net migration into the U.K. the number of people moving to the U.K. minus the number of those moving abroad in 2024, official figures showed Thursday. The Office for National Statistics said the figure stood at an estimated 431,000 in the year, down 49.9% from 860,000 a year earlier. That's the biggest percentage decline since the height of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, and the largest numerical drop for any 12-month period. Britain has relied on people coming into the country legally to contribute to eco-

nomic growth, certainly in the decades after World War II, when millions arrived to help rebuild the country. And for years, it wasn't much of a political issue and on the periphery of debate. But it has become a politically toxic issue over the past 20 years or so, and played a key role in the Brexit vote of 2016, when Britain voted to leave the European Union. Membership of the EU comes with the obligation to offer free movement to all citizens of the 27-country bloc.

But immigration figures have gone up, not down, post-Brexit.

The anti-immigration party Reform U.K. won big in recent local elections and is ahead in many opinion

polls. Its argument is that too-high immigration is impacting on public services, housing and societal cohesion as a whole.

The figures released Thursday do not include those arriving in the U.K. by unauthorized means to seek asylum, many in flimsy, small boats across the English Channel. Though that number is far lower some 37,000 people crossed the English Channel on small boats last year it's amplified the heat surrounding the debate.

A more detailed look at Thursday's figures shows that the biggest contributor to the fall was a sharp decline in immigration, with the number of people coming into the U.K. below

1 million for the first time in around three years. However, the statistics agency also found that emigration swelled back to 2017 levels. The number of arrivals in the U.K. surged from 2022

onward, driven by many factors, including the more than 200,000 people fleeing Russia's war in Ukraine and more than 150,000 from Hong Kong on special overseas visas. □



**A passenger arrives from a flight at Terminal 5 of Heathrow Airport in London, Aug. 2, 2021.**

Associated Press

## Organization of American States under pressure from the US to help quell gang violence in Haiti

By DÁNICA COTO

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico

**(AP)** — The Organization of American States came under pressure Thursday to help quash gang violence in Haiti as a U.N.-backed mission led by Kenyan police in the troubled Caribbean country struggles with a lack of funds and personnel.

A U.S. Department of State official attending an OAS meeting on Haiti's security crisis said that the Washington-based group has a critical role to play in the nation.

"Much more can and should be done," said Barbara Feinstein, deputy assistant secretary for Caribbean Affairs and Haiti at the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Feinstein echoed comments made by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio at a House Appropriations Committee hearing on Haiti.

"Why do we have an OAS, if the OAS can't put together a mission to handle the most critical region in our hemisphere?" Rubio said Wednesday as he



Commuters pass by police patrolling an intersection in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Friday, May 9, 2025.  
Associated Press

proposed building a mission with regional partners.

"We're grateful to the Kenyans, but this is a regional problem, and it should have a regional solution."

OAS Secretary-General Luis Almagro on Thursday acknowledged that the Kenya-led mission was struggling and said that the organization was working on new initiatives.

"There is a need for a new

structure for the mission," he said. Last year, the U.S. and Haiti called for it to be replaced with a U.N. peacekeeping mission, but the U.N. Security Council hasn't supported such a change.

'A wave of indignation'

Thursday's OAS meeting was held just hours after gangs launched another attack in Haiti's central Artibonite region.

Gunmen stormed a church in Préval, killing 22 people, including an 86-year-old pastor who was beheaded, according to Bertide Horace, spokesperson for the Commission for Dialogue, Reconciliation and Awareness to Save the Artibonite. "This tragedy has sparked a wave of indignation throughout the country," she told The Associated Press, adding that the vic-

tims called for help, but that neither police nor officers with the Kenya-led mission responded.

Kenya's OAS representative, Jayne Toroitich, said that while the mission has made considerable progress in Haiti despite ongoing challenges, Haitian police need more training and that the mission more money and personnel.

Only 1,000 out of the 2,500 personnel envisioned by the U.N. Security Council are currently in Haiti. In addition, the mission is operating at only 30% of its capability in terms of equipment, the representative said.

The OAS meeting was held a day after Jimmy Chérizier, a former elite police officer who became one of Haiti's most powerful gang leaders, pleaded with people from the Delmas 30 neighborhood in the capital, Port-au-Prince, to let armed men through, so that they could overthrow Haiti's prime minister and its transitional presidential council.

"I need the road to get to the prime minister's office," he said in a video posted Wednesday on social media. □

## Florida court awards Mexican government massive civil judgment against former security chief

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — A Florida court awarded the Mexican government a massive civil judgment Thursday against its former

security chief who is now serving a lengthy prison sentence in the United States for taking bribes from drug traffickers.



Mexican Security Chief Genaro García Luna speaks during an interview in Mexico City, Sept. 3, 2009.

Associated Press

Judge Lisa Walsh ordered Genaro García Luna to pay more than \$748 million and his wife Linda Cristina Pereyra to hand over more than \$1.7 billion. García Luna was sentenced to more than 38 years in a U.S. prison last October for taking massive bribes to help drug traffickers.

Mexico's former secretary of public security was convicted by a New York jury in 2023 of accepting millions of dollars in bribes to protect the violent Sinaloa cartel that he was supposedly combating. He is the highest-level Mexican government official to be convicted in the United States.

He served as secretary of public security to then-President Felipe Calderón from 2006 to 2012.

After leaving office García Luna moved to Florida. His lawyers said he was a legitimate businessman who did consulting in Florida before he was arrested in 2019.

García Luna and associates set up companies that got 30 dubious government contracts while he was Mexico's top security official in 2006-2012 and for six years afterward.

The contracts were for things like surveillance, monitoring and communications equipment used in prisons

and in intelligence work. The contracts were presumably inflated. In one case, the contract was simply falsified.

García Luna allegedly channeled money from the prison security and government intelligence technology contracts to offshore accounts, many in Barbados, then sent it to Miami to buy fancy condos and vintage cars. García Luna and his associates bought several vintage Mustangs from the 1960s and '70s. They also bought luxury sports cars like Lamborghinis and Ferraris. The Florida lawsuit was filed in September 2021. □

## Place names in San Nicolas and their origins

(Oranjestad)--If you're ever taking a tour of Aruba, San Nicolas would definitely be on your itinerary. From relaxing on the white, sandy beaches of Baby and Roger's Beach, to exploring the prehistoric caves of Quadirikiri and Fontein, you are taking in a full view of what San Nicolas has to offer. But did you know that you are also passing through areas whose names have historical origins? Here are a few place names in San Nicolas and their origin story.

### Sero Colorado

On your way to Baby or Roger's Beach, you'll pass by the famous Red Anchor at what was once the entrance to the Colony residential community and be greeted with red soiled hills by the coast. This is Sero Colorado. Named after the 30-meter, deep red, limestone hill, "Sero Colorado" translates to "Colored Hill". Sero Colorado has deep historical ties with the once-thriving phosphate industry in the area. Matter of fact, there are still underground shafts and passages deep in Sero Colorado from the time of phosphate mining. In 1958, the refinery at the time, Lago, adopted this name for the residential section of its employees.

### Vader Piet

Another well visited area, Vader Piet is located in the Arikok National Park. Recognizable sites within this area includes the Wind Mills and the Quadirikiri Cave. The origin of this name is part historical



and speculation, as there are slight deviations from what actually happened.

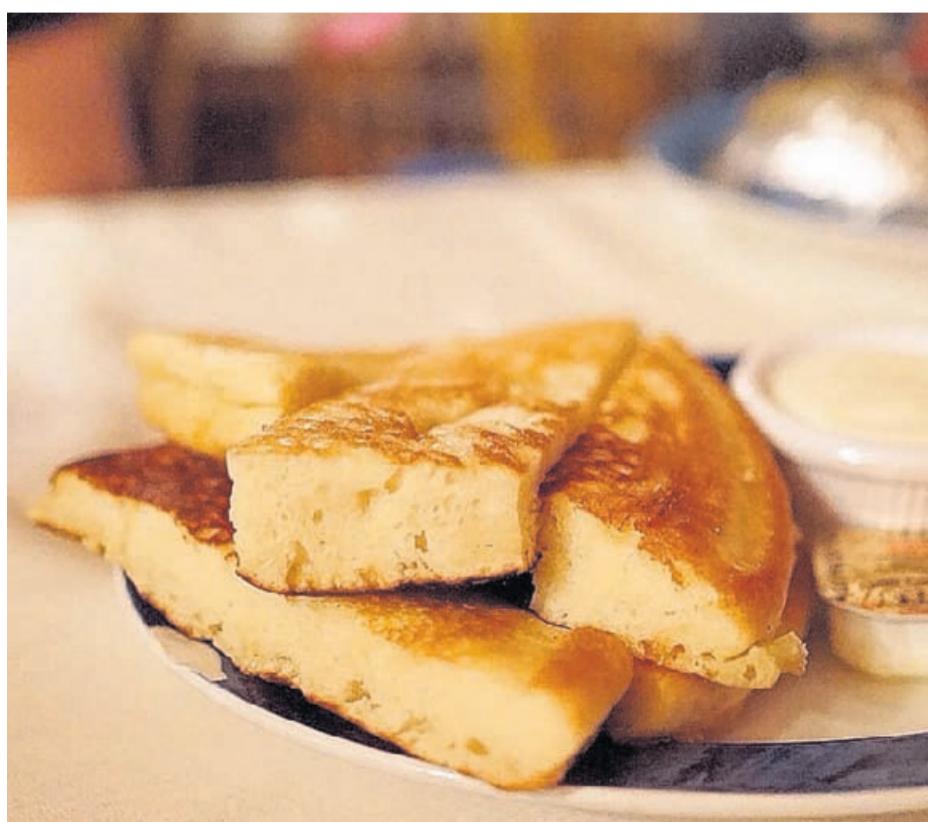
In 1829, Pieter Lampe was a planter and the person responsible for governing this remote area. As the story goes, Pieter was well known and beloved for his kindness and good treatment of his employees, and was therefore also called Vader Piet (Father Piet). However, he was tragically murdered—some speculate at the hands of a slave. For his work and good heart, the area was named after him.

### San Nicolas

Of course we can't forget San Nicolas itself. Much like Vader Piet, the origin of the name San Nicolas has so far two different accounts. In the literal sense, "San Nicolas" translates to "Saint Nicolas", leading many to believe that this district was named after a Spanish saint. Though one account does support this with the theory that the district was named after the saint by Spanish colonizers, the other account is much less divine, but does refer to an influential figure in the area.

Nicolaas van der Biest was a successful landowner during the time of the phosphate boom in late 19th century Aruba. Back then, landowners (most, if not all of them men) were referred to as "Shon" by their subordinates. So, the district was originally named after Shon Nicolaas. Over time, the name evolved into what is now San Nicolas.

**Source:** "Aruba: Short History" by Dr. J. Hartog.



(Oranjestad)—If you're ever up for an Aruban snack, try making another Aruban classic appetizer called Pan Bati. Similar to a pancake both in appearance and cooking, this is a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

## Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make "pan bati"

### Ingredients:

2 cups of all purpose flour  
1 cup grams of fine cornmeal (we recommend the Harina PAN brand)  
2 tbsp baking powder  
1 1/3 cup of milk  
1 pinch of salt  
2 tbsp of granulated sugar  
Oil for cooking

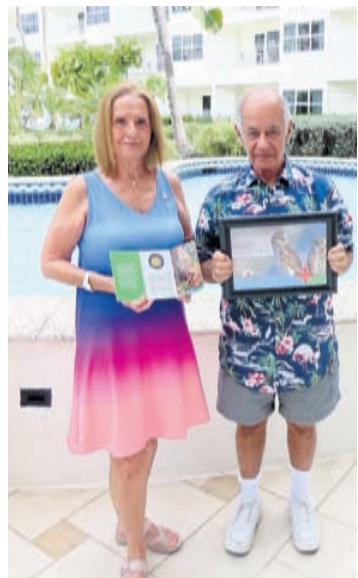
### Instructions:

Add all the dry ingredients in a bowl first, and stir until well mixed. Then add the milk and beat until reached a pancake-like consistency. If more moisture is needed, add some water until reached desired consistency.

In a hot pan with oil, pour in enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan. Just like pancakes, flip the pan bati when one side turns golden brown. When your pan bati is ready, place on a plate and cover with a clean kitchen towel.

Traditionally, pan bati is cut in triangle pieces, and is often eaten as a side dish with soup, fried fish or stews. However, it is also casually enjoyed with some butter and cheese on top! □

## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club!



The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

### The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

### The honorees were:

Emerald Ambassadors  
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Dorothy Howard from Kissimmee, Florida, USA.

Ms. Keyttin Silva, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

### The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- The Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club employees.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's best seafood.
- Aruba's beach water

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our

sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees

for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".

## Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our "Dorado"



(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Dorado", a common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Dorado.

Dorado has many different names it can be referred to. Dral, Dorao, Drals, Drado, are some of them in Papiamento. In English, it is also called Mahi Mahi, Dolphinfish, or Dorado. It's a good example to reflect on why there can be many names. The same fish becomes known by different common names, why? Common names come only when a group of people, to understand each other, assign a name to a fish. Mahi Mahi, for example, comes from Hawaii and means "very strong". Dorado is based on Spanish and refers to the golden yellow color that the fish shines with under the sun. Why it's called Dolphinfish in English is not well defined and while there are several stories around this, none have been confirmed.

Dorado is found in all tropical to subtropical oceans around the world. Dorado is very popular both for recreational fishing and for consumption. It is known among fishermen as an exciting catch and a fish that puts up a good fight. Its meat is very good for consumption and it is also commercially fished for that reason.

They grow very fast, up to 2.7 inches (almost 7 cm) per week. They can live up to a maximum of 5 years although very few reach that age. Most become adults within 1 year but many become reproductive after just 5 or 6 months and reproduce very quickly too.

They live in open water on the surface most of the time. Many fish seek them around sushi lines or floating objects on the sea. Often you will find a group landing together and if you keep a male on the line, often the others will stay close or can keep the group interested by giving shrimp or squid.

### Description:

Dorado has a distinctive body. It has a large tail and its long, flat body ends in a large blunt head. Its color of yellow and green or blue makes it immediately recognizable, even with small variations in these colors.

Dorado has clear differences between adult females and males. The male is larger and can easily reach 50 to 80 pounds and has a much flatter head compared to the female. Therefore, male Dorados are also called "bull Dorado".

Dorado can be found in our waters around the island all year round, but there are periods when it is easier to find than others.

Source: The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (Santa Rosa).

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(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many

## Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

**tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.**

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect

our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely

not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores

and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!□

## Visit the island's hidden natural pools



**(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.**

### Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle’s Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you’re up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to pur-

chase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you’ve completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely not suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It’s also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

### Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there.



Because it’s still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won’t be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped la-

goon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you’ll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one. □

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.

**Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours**

## The Aruban way of life Creating community with Cas di Torto

**(Oranjestad)—The Aruban people understand that a happy life is spent in great ambience with your loved ones. Passed down from one generation to the other, building community has been a key aspect in forging our traditions and customs. The Cas di Torto (mud house) played a big role in cultivating community, bridging families together and forming close bonds with your neighbors—something we highly value today.**

### Cas di Torto: History and construction



The origin of the Cas di Torto is said to date back to the early 19th century in the Paraguana Peninsula in Venezuela. Refugees who sought sanctuary on Aruba introduced this building method to the island.

The uprights of the walls were made with sturdy and straight wayaca or kwihi wood, or from thin mangrove struts. Then, the wattle walls were weaved in using branches and twigs from the warero and sisal plant, daubed with a mixture of grass and mud. Finally, the walls got a coat

of white plaster to seal everything in.

For roofing, corn stalks, palm fronds and straws were used, allowing air to flow freely through the house. This method of roofing was known throughout the ABC islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), but the use of cornstalks in Aruba eventually got replaced with use of mud and white plaster for the roofs. The white plaster all around made the houses look like cake, hence the name “Torto” (Spanish for “cake”).

### Building community

Building Torto houses was often a community effort. Young couples who were about to get married had to have their house built before they could tie the knot and start their own family. This is where the help of the community comes into play.

Neighbors, extended family and friends would all help in the construction of a Torto House. And everyone had a



role: The men oversaw the building of the house, and the women were tasked with collecting wood and straws, cooking and taking care of the little ones.

The couple’s family were primarily responsible for feeding everyone who helped build the house. Before construction, someone usually had the task to prepare the meal; going fishing or slaughter farm animals like goats, chicken or sheep. Even the older kids had their tasks; the older children of the family usually helped with collecting water and mixing the mud.

The average duration of con-

structing a Cas di Torto was 4 months.

At the end of a long day of work, everyone would gather around and enjoy a feast of hearty food. This type of help from friends and family became a tradition and was called “paga lomba”: You help me today; I’ll help you tomorrow.

Nowadays, traditional Cas di Torto are rare, especially those that are still inhabited. Houses that do exist probably date back more than a century. □

**Picture credits: Aruba National Library (BNA) and the Monumentbureau archive on Coleccion.aw**

# The Aruban Cunukero

## From past to present

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's culture consists of rich historical traditions that make up the Aruban identity and lifestyle. However, the life of the cunukero (farmer) is perhaps the most important aspect of our culture, in a sense representing to locals the true essence of the Aruban.

Historically, cunucus (farms) played a huge role in the early social and economic development of Aruba, and its relevance dates back to the early days of the colonization era. Upon being discovered by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th century, Aruba was used primarily as a ranch, housing horses and cattle brought from Europe. During the Dutch colonization era where the West Indian Company (WIC) dominated the economic sphere on the island, using the land to set up cattle farms and ranches remained popular.

**Anthropologist Sidney Mintz divided Caribbean farmers back in four categories:**

1. The "squatters", who were mostly comprised of illegal and poor colonists, runaway slaves and deserters who took advantage of the Spanish's weak supervision on Caribbean islands like Cuba and the DR;
2. Then you have "Early Yeomen", who were legal farmers who came to the west under contract. Once their contract expired, they were given a plot of land for independent use;
3. Proto-Peasants were plantation slaves who were allowed to have a small piece of land to grow food for their own consumption. This was to curb the cost of living on the plantations;
4. Lastly you have the "Runaway Peasantries", usually comprised of runaway slaves



who acquired farming tools and cattle through stealing or through secret exchanges with other slaves from different plantations.

However, the Aruban cunukeros back then are hard to place, and their history may explain why.

From 1636 (beginning of Dutch colonization era) to before the oil industry in 1924, Aruba's population consisted of mostly farmers. These farmers were mostly indigenous and were characterized as peasants. They weren't allowed to participate in trading, but instead were granted a piece of land to live off of. However, in exchange for this grant, these indigenous farmers were obligated to work for the WIC, doing daily tasks such as taking care of or hunting cattle—large majority of which were destined for Curacao, clean water tanks and chop wood, among other things.

As much as these farmers were given the opportunity to live "free" with a plot of land, their exclusion from the trading and business world, as well as being deprived the chance to become real property and cattle owners, made them a unique group among Caribbean farmers at the time.

The WIC placed a lot of restrictions on these indigenous farmers—a method to safeguard their cattle deposit on the island. The indigenous farmers were mostly granted less than 7 acres of land. Those who owned bigger land were either once affiliated with the WIC or were colonists who settled on the island to try their luck at farming. In 1767, there were about 120 houses/cunucus on the island.

farmers would see a big loss in their livestock, and hence profit.

Although the WIC at one point did try to come up with an initiative to get more people to have land on the island, the climate never really allowed real profit from farming. Because of the climate, Aruban farmers in general could not keep large quantities of livestock. At a certain point toward the end of the 18th century, the climate got so bad that many farmers decided to leave the island for a while.

For this reason, the farming economy on the island remained small. As the years went by and people noticed that these farms could not really produce any sustainable profit, farmers kept their small piece of land just to live off of. This is why the Aruban cunukeros only played a very tiny role into the plantation economy.

In modern Aruba, cunucus and cunukeros still exist on the island, fortunately with more freedom and more opportunity to tap into the agricultural market. These farmers usually sell their produce on a smaller scale, like during farmers' market events and other types of (holiday) events.

Source: "Arubaans Akkoord: Opstellen over Aruba van voor de komst van de olieindustrie (Aruban Accord: Essays on Aruba Before the Arrival of the Oil Industry)" by Alofs, Luc; Rutgers, Wim; Coomans, Henny E. red.

**Photo credits: Aruba National Archives.**



## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Cleaner

1 Western scent

state 40 Like Loki

capital 41 Foe

6 Minimal amount

11 Building wing

12 Fighting

13 Belief

14 Zigzag

15 Under-world group

17 Piano part

18 Tell tales

19 Close-fitting jackets

22 Airport sched. abbr.

23 Lone Star

Staters

24 Two cubed

25 Malay island

27 Easy victim

30 Ballpark figure

31 Greek vowel

32 Skill

33 Kitchen fixtures

35 Kind of ballerina

38 Notions



5-27

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONG FELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-27 CRYPTOQUOTE

F N C Z G B C L Y S T N V T W Y

B Z G W W Z G U G Y Z W Y K J N Z Y

K T J G S U Y S T W F N C Z W S N

K G Y B . — V N Z Y G E U Z N V

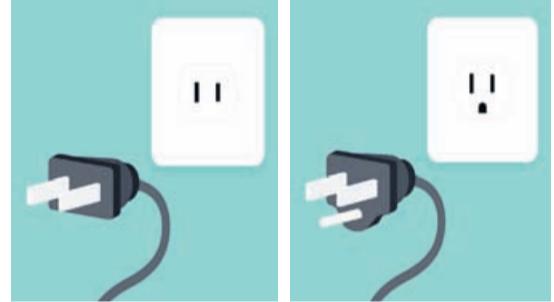
Cryptoquote: OPEN YOUR EYES,  
LOOK WITHIN. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE  
LIFE YOU'RE LIVING? — BOB MARLEY

## Cruise ship Schedule: May 20 - 30 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH
TUE	20	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	07.00 13.00	16.00 23.00	B C 1 1
WED	21	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION OASIS OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 08.00 06.00	22.00 21.00 ****	C I E 1
SUN	25	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E -
TUE	27	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C 1
WED	28	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E 1
FRI	30	ISLAND PRINCESS	07.00	18.00	C 1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



## Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



## Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



## Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



## Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

# Billion dollar pizza? Bitcoin soars on key anniversary of crypto's growth

By ALAN SUDERMAN  
AP Business Writer

It's not an official holiday yet but for many cryptocurrency enthusiasts "Bitcoin Pizza Day" is still special. Thursday marks the 15th anniversary of the first known use of cryptocurrency to buy real-world goods.

The 10,000 bitcoin that software developer Laszlo Hanyecz paid for two Papa John's pizzas delivered to his Florida home on May 22, 2010, were worth about \$41 at the time. Today they're worth \$1.1 billion, as bitcoin hits record high prices.

Several cryptocurrency companies are announcing promotions and other celebrations to mark Bitcoin Pizza Day.

Bitget, a cryptocurrency exchange, announced that it's giving away pizzas to more than 2,000 people at gatherings held around the world.

Here's the backstory of Bitcoin Pizza Day:

#### Humble Beginnings

The first bitcoin was created in early 2009 by the digital currency's still unknown creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. It started as a passion project for libertarian-minded computer nerds who wanted to create a digital payment system that didn't rely on a third party like a government or financial institution – for transactions.

Hanyecz was an early enthusiast and became active on an early bitcoin internet message board, offering technical advice on how to "mine" bitcoin more effectively.

Central to bitcoin's technology is the process through which transactions are verified and then recorded on what's known as the blockchain. Computers connected to the bitcoin network race to solve complex mathematical calculations that verify the transactions, with the winner earning newly minted bitcoins as a reward in a process known as mining.



A neon sign that alerts customers that the business accepts bitcoin as payment, hangs in the window of Healthy Harvest Indoor Gardening in Hillsboro, Ore., on Feb. 7, 2018.

Associated Press

In the early days, enthusiasts could mine bitcoin through their home computers and Hanyecz accumulated thousands of the new digital asset. Nowadays, mining bitcoin has become a highly competitive field with multi-billion-dollar companies using specialized computers in entire data centers to acquire new bitcoins.

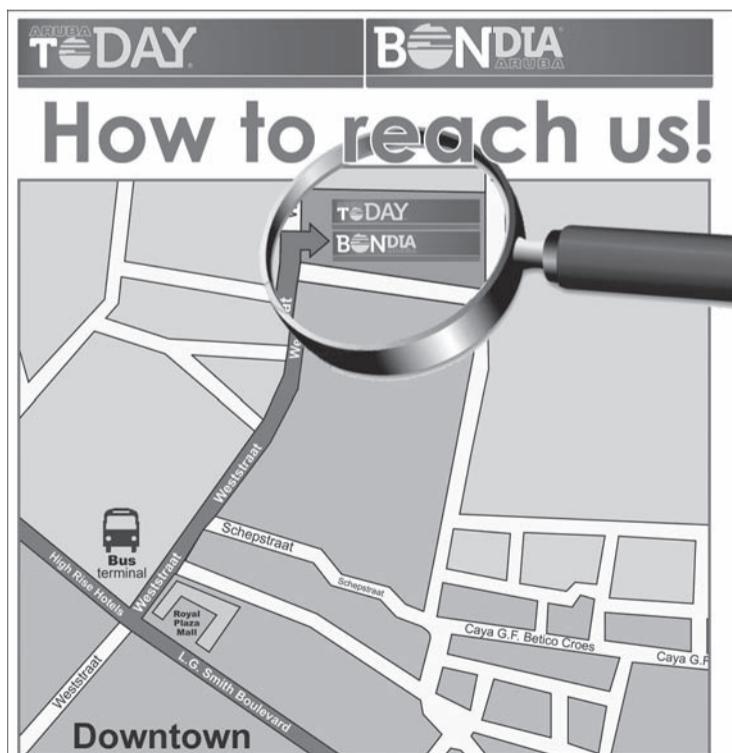
'No weird fish topping'

In the early days, no one quite knew what to do

with the bitcoin they were mining. On May 18, 2010, Hanyecz tried an experiment and posted a message offering 10,000 bitcoins for pizza.

"I like things like onions, peppers, sausage, mushrooms, tomatoes, pepperoni, etc.. just standard stuff no weird fish topping or anything like that," Hanyecz wrote.

Three days later, Hanyecz wondered if he needed to up the price. □



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Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi 588 0035  
Taxi D.T.S. 587 2300  
Taxi Serv. Aruba 583 3232  
A1 Taxi Serv. 280 2828

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American Airlines 582 2700  
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Jet Blue 588 2244  
Surinam 582 7896

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FAVI- Visually Impaired  
Tel. 582 5051  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel. 583 8989  
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Relacional Tel. 583 5400  
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

## Movie Review: 'Pee-wee as Himself' unmasks Paul Reubens

By JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

Some bio documentaries are carried mostly by the reflective, archival footage that send you back to the subject's heyday.

But in Matt Wolf's "Pee-wee as Himself" as wonderful as much of the archival stuff is nothing is more compelling than when Paul Reubens is simply himself.

Before his death from cancer in 2023, Reubens sat for 40 hours of interviews with Wolf. His cooperation is clearly uncertain and sometimes strained in the film he stopped participating for a year before talking about his infamous 2001 arrest and his doubts on the project linger throughout.

Reubens would rather be directing it, himself, he says more than once. The man many know as Pee-wee Herman is used to controlling his own image, and he has good reason for being skeptical of others doing so. But beyond that tension over authorship of his story, Reubens is also delightfully resistant to playing the part of documentary cliche. "I was born in 1938 in a little house on the edge of the Mississippi River," he begins. "My father worked on a steamboat."

Talking heads have gotten a bad rap in documentaries in recent years, but in "Pee-wee as Himself,"



This image released by HBO Max shows Paul Reubens in a scene from the documentary "Pee-Wee As Himself."

nothing is more compelling than Paul Reubens simply sitting before the camera, looking back at us.

Pee-wee may be iconic, but Paul Reubens is hysterical. And Wolf's film, with that winking title, makes for a revealing portrait of a performer who so often put persona in front of personhood. In that way, "Pee-wee as Himself," a two-part documentary premiering Friday on HBO and HBO Max, is moving as the posthumous unmasking of a man you can't help but wish we had known better. Reubens was a product of TV. He grew up transformed

by shows like "Howdy Doody," "The Mickey Mouse Club" and, later, "I Love Lucy."

"I wanted to jump into my TV and live in that world," he says.

Part of the delight of the first half of Wolf's film is watching the wide range of inspirations the circus culture of Sarasota, Florida, where his family moved to; Andy Warhol; performance art coalesce into a singular creation like Pee-wee. That name, he says, came from a tiny harmonica that said "Pee-wee" on it, and a kid named Herman he knew growing up.

"It was a whole bunch of things that had never really connected connecting," says Reubens.

Wolf carefully traces the birth of Reubens' alter-ego through the Groundlings in Los Angeles, on stage at the Roxy and then out into the world, on "The Gong Show," on Letterman, in the 1985 Tim Burton-directed "Pee-wee's Big Adventure" and, ultimately, on "Pee-wee's Playhouse."

"I felt in a way I was bringing the character out into the wild," he recalls. "I just stayed in character all day." That came with obvious sacrifices, too. For the

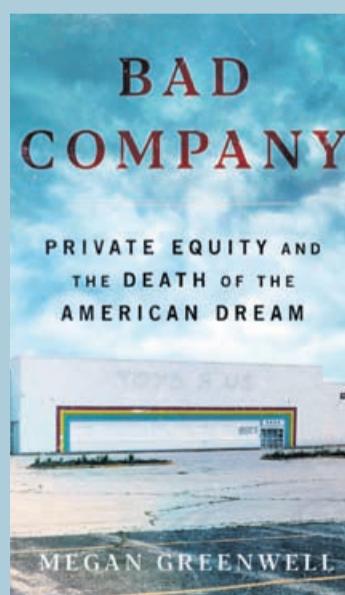
Associated Press

sake of his career, Reubens stayed closeted as a gay man. He grew intensely private and seldom appeared in public not in character. Reubens also jettisoned some of his close collaborators, like Phil Hartman, as his fame grew. There's tragedy, both self-inflicted and not, in Reubens' increasing isolation.

When Reubens was arrested in 1991 and charged with indecent exposure, Reubens' carefully guarded persona came crashing down. The scandal was worse because people knew only Pee-wee and not Reubens. There was also injustice in the whole affair, particularly the 2002 arrest that followed on charges of child pornography that were later dropped. In both cases, homophobia played a role.

When Reubens does get around to talking about it, he's most resistant to painting himself as a victim, or offering any, as he says, "tears of a clown."

Wolf, the director of films like "Recorder," about Marion Stokes, who recorded television all day long for 30 years, and "Spaceship Earth," about the quirky 1991 Biosphere 2 experiment, is better known as a talented documentarian of visual archives than as an compelling interviewer of celebrities. □



This book cover image released by HarperCollins Publishers shows "Bad Company" by Megan Greenwell. (Megan Greenwell via Associated

## Book Review: Veteran journalist explores impact of private equity industry on U.S. society

By ANN LEVIN

Associated Press

Megan Greenwell was the editor in chief of Deadspin when it was acquired in 2019 by a Boston-based private equity firm. After three months of watching her new bosses make what seemed to her to be boneheaded decisions, she quit. Two months later, the staff followed her out the door. Within five years, the once popular online sports magazine known for its irreverent reporting had been sold to an obscure Maltese website.

Stunned by what she witnessed, the veteran journalist was determined to get to the bottom of a little understood, lightly regulated industry that owns hospitals, day care centers, supermarket chains, newspapers, commercial and residential real estate, and much more. The big names are Blackstone, the Carlyle Group, Apollo Global Management, KKR and Cerberus Capital Management. But what, she wondered, do they actually do?

The result of her inquiry is "Bad Company: Private Eq-

uity and the Death of the American Dream," a deeply reported, briskly paced and highly disturbing account of how the private equity industry has "reshaped the American economy to serve its own interests, creating a new class of billionaires while stripping ordinary people of their livelihoods, their health care, their homes, and their sense of security."

Instead of focusing on the macroeconomic level, she tells the story through four remarkable people whose lives were upended after private equity acquisitions. Liz was a Toys R Us floor supervisor when the storied retailer was acquired by Mitt Romney's company, Bain Capital, and other investors and eventually went under, laying off 33,000 employees without severance pay.

Roger practiced medicine in rural Wyoming when private equity acquired his hospital and gutted services. Natalia was working for local Gannett newspapers at a time when the chain eliminated more than half its staff after years of private equity ownership. □

# Scott McLaughlin angrily defensive, utterly motivated after Team Penske penalties ahead of Indy 500

By DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Scott McLaughlin will have a new strategist and engineer for the Indianapolis 500 because of a rules infraction that concerned a part on Team Penske cars other than his own, and that has left him both angrily defensive and utterly motivated. Perhaps doubly so, given the part in question that led to such serious repercussions for one of the most powerful teams in auto racing appears to have done nothing for performance, but was rather an alteration to a spec part primarily for aesthetics.

"Smart people in the paddock know there was no gain, you know? It's frustrating that this is blown up like it has," McLaughlin said during the Indy 500's annual media day Thursday, "and it's cost three people that I'm very close with their jobs.

But overall, my view on it right now is just to focus forward."

He has no choice. The race is Sunday.

That's one week after



The car driven by Scott McLaughlin, of New Zealand, becomes airborne after hitting the wall in the second turn during practice for the Indianapolis 500 auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis, Sunday, May 18, 2025.

Team Penske drivers Josef Newgarden and Scott Dixon had their cars pulled from the qualifying line over modifications to the attenuator, a safety part that cannot be changed for any reason. IndyCar has since said there has been no evidence that the seams filled on the piece provided a competitive

advantage, yet the series nevertheless responded with serious penalties: the cars were sent to the rear of the 33-car field, they were stripped of points and handed heavy financial penalties. McLaughlin, who had crashed in a practice session ahead of qualifying, was spared the sanctions given to his teammates

when the attenuator found amid the wreckage of the No. 3 car had not been altered. He will start 10th. He was still penalized, though, when team owner Roger Penske who also owns IndyCar, Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Indy 500 fired team president Tim Cindric and Team Penske officials Ron Ruze-

ski and Kyle Moyer on Wednesday.

Moyer had been serving as the strategist on McLaughlin's car.

"Ultimately, those three guys are friends of mine and have done a tremendous amount in my career," said McLaughlin, who drove for Penske in Supercars in Australia and New Zealand before coming to IndyCar. "I guess you could say there's a sadness from my perspective. At the end of the day, I drive for Roger Penske. I respect the decision.

"I'm disappointed in some of my peers and people in this room," McLaughlin added, growing a bit heated, "just how it was taken out of proportion in some ways.

At the same time, I think people forget just what Roger's done for this sport in general, and that definitely gets thrown to the side a little bit, which I find a hard time not being passionate about that."

McLaughlin will have Ben Bretzman as his strategist and Malcolm Finch as lead engineer on Sunday. □

## Kooij wins 12th stage of Giro d'Italia in sprint finish, Del Toro keeps overall lead

VIADANA, Italy (AP) — Dutch cyclist Olav Kooij won the 12th stage of the Giro d'Italia in a sprint finish Thursday as Mexico's Isaac Del Toro slightly extended his overall lead in the pink jersey.

Wout van Aert, the winner of Sunday's ninth stage, placed himself at the front as riders turned for home and led his Vismal-Lease a Bike teammate Kooij into the final 200 meters.

From there, Kooij then held off countryman Casper Van Uden and Britain's Ben Turner to secure the first Giro stage win of his career.

"I'd been waiting for this victory. In the previous two sprints, things didn't go as planned. But today, ev-

erything went smoothly and I'm really happy," Kooij said. "Only Wout can do such a long lead-out. I managed to jump onto Casper's wheel and then come around him."

They all finished in just under four hours.

Del Toro picked up a two-second time bonus during an intermediate sprint section and leads by 33 seconds over Spaniard Juan Ayuso in second place and by 1 minute, 9 seconds from Italian Antonio Tiberi in third.

The 21-year-old Del Toro became the first Mexican cyclist to lead the Giro when he finished second on Sunday.

Thursday's stage started from Modena home of

the famed Balsamic vinegar and the sparkling red wine Lambrusco and rolled through the countryside before finishing in Viadana in the Lombardy region.

The slightly undulating 172-kilometer (107-mile) route was best suited to sprinters.

In overcast and damp conditions a three-rider breakaway of Italians Giacomo Epis, Andrea Pietrobon and Manuele Tarozzi was caught about 37 kilometers from the end.

Friday's slightly hilly 13th stage is 180 kilometers long, starting in Rovigo and finishing in Vicenza.

The Giro ends in Rome on June 1.

Primoz Roglic, the 2023

champion, is 1:26 behind Del Toro.

The 35-year-old Roglic, a former ski jumper before turning to cycling, is aiming for a second Giro title

and sixth Grand Tour title overall.

The Slovenian has won the Spanish Vuelta a record-equalling four times. □



Netherlands' Olav Kooij crosses the finish line to win the 12th stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race from Modena to Viadana (Oglio-Po), Italy, Thursday, May 22, 2025.

Associated Press



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## After NFL approval, LA28's Wasserman is optimistic MLB players will also find a path to the Olympics

By GREG BEACHAM  
AP Sports Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — The organizers of the Los Angeles Olympics remain optimistic that Major League Baseball will find a way to join the NFL in sending the world's best athletes in their respective sports to the 2028 Games.

LA28 president and chairman Casey Wasserman said he has been in close contact with MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred about the decision that must be made by both the league and the players' union on whether to send players to the Olympics in the middle of the 2028 baseball season. There's no current timetable for the decision.

"I'm optimistic because it's the right thing for the sport of baseball, it's the right thing for the players and it's certainly the right thing for the Olympics," Wasserman

told The Associated Press on Wednesday. "I think when things make sense for

everybody, you can usually find a way to get things done."

LA28 was buoyed by the NFL owners' unanimous decision this week to approve

the players' participation in the inaugural Olympic flag football event, with Wasserman calling it "an awesome day."

The Los Angeles organizing committee is hoping for similar news on baseball, whenever the decision is made.

"We're very engaged with the commissioner," Wasserman said.

"I talked to him in anticipation of the NFL announcement so they knew what was coming. They have a different challenge because it's in the middle of their season, but we are very engaged in ongoing discussions with the hope to get to a good result."

Players' union head Tony Clark has said his players want to vie for Olympic gold particularly those who got a taste of international competition in previous World Baseball Classics. □



Casey Wasserman, chairman of LA 2028, the organizing committee for the 2028 Summer Olympics, is interviewed at an NBCUniversal and U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee press preview event to promote the upcoming Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, Wednesday, May 21, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press